

The Famous Flower of Serving-men:

O R,

The LADY turned to be a SERVING-MAN.

*Her Love being slain, her Father dead,
Her Bower robb'd, her Servants fled;
She dress'd herself in Man's Attire,
She trimm'd her Locks, she cut her Hair,
And thereupon she changed her Name,
From fair Alice to sweet William,*

To the Tune of, *Flora's Farewell*; or *Summer Time*.



YOU beauteous Ladies great and small,
I write to you, one and all
Whereby that you may understand
What I have suffer'd in this Land.

I was by birth a Lady fair,
My Father's chief and only Heir;
But when my good old Father dy'd,
Then I was made a young Knight's Bride.

But when my Love built me a Bower,
Bedeck'd with many a fragrant Flower;
A braver Bower you never did see,
Than my true Love did build for me.

But there came Thieves late in the Night,
That robb'd my Bower and slew my Knight

And after that my Knight was slain,
I could no longer there remain.

My Servants all from me did fly,
In the midst of my sad Extremity:
And left me by myself alone,
With Heart more cold than any Stone.

Yet though my Heart was full of Care
Heav'n suffered me not to despair;
Wherefore in Haste I chang'd my Name,
From fair *Alice* to sweet *William*.

And therewithal I cut my Hair,
And dress'd myself in Man's Attire;
With Doubler, Hose and Bever-hat,
And a Gold Band about my Neck.

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A Silver Rapier by my side,
So like a Gallant I did ride;
The Thing that I delighted on,
It was to be a Serving-man.

Thus in my sumptuous Man's Array,
I bravely rode along the Way;
And at the last it chanced so,
I unto the King's Court did go.

Then to the King I bowed full low,
My Love and Duty for to show,
And so much Favour I did crave,
That I a Servant's-place might have.

Stand up, brave Youth the King reply'd,
Thy Service shall not be deny'd;
But tell me first what thou can'st do,
Thou shalt be fitted thereunto.

Will thou be Usher of my Hall,
To wait upon my Nobles all?
Wilt thou be taster of my Wine,
To wait upon me when I dine;

Or wilt thou be my Chamberlain,
To make my Bed so soft and fine?
Or wilt thou be one of my Guards?
And I will give the great Reward.

Sweet *William* with a smiling Face,
Said to the King, if it please your Grace
To shew such Favour unto me,
I your Chamberlain would be.

The King did then the Nobles call,
To ask the Council of them all:
Who gave Consent, sweet *William* he,
The King's own Chamberlain should be.

Now mark what strange Things came to pass
As the King one Day a Hunting was,
With all his Lords and Noble Train,
Sweet *William* did at Home remain.

Sweet *William* had no Company then,
At home with him but an old Man;
And when the saw the Honte was clear,
He took a Lute which he had there.

Upon the Lute sweet *William* play'd,
And to the same he sung and said,

With a pleasant and most noble Voice,
Which made the old Man to rejoice.

"My father was as brave a Lord,
"As ever *Europe* did afford;
"My Mother was a Lady bright,
"My Husband was a gallant knight.

"And I myself a Lady gay,
"Bedeck'd with glorious rich Array;
"The bravest Lady in the Land
"Had no more pleasures at Command.

"I had my Music every Day,
"Harmonious Lessons for to play,
"I had my Virgins fair and free,
"Continually to wait on me.

"But now, alas! my Husband's dead
"And all my Friends are from me fled;
"My former Joys are past and gone,
"For now I am a Serving-man."

At last the King from Hunting came,
And presently upon the same,
He called for the good old Man,
And thus to speak he thus began.

What News what News old man quoth he,
What News has thou to tell to me,
Brave News the old man then did say,
Sweet *William* is a Lady gay.

If this be true thou tellest to me,
I'll make thee Lord of high Degree:
But if thy words do prove a Lie,
Thou shalt be hang'd up instantly.

But when the King the Truth had found,
His Joys did more and more abound:
According as the old man did say,
Sweet *William* is a Lady gay.

Therefore the King without delay,
Put on his glorious rich array,
Upon her Head a Crown of Gold,
Which was most famous to behold.

And then for fear of further Strife,
He took sweet *William* for his Wife;
The like before was never seen,
A serving man to be a Queen.